

REMARKS

Applicant respectfully requests that the foregoing amendments be made prior to examination of the present application.

In the specification, paragraphs have been amended to change "softening component" to "flexibilizer." The word "flexibilizer" is believed to be a more accurate translation of the corresponding Japanese term than "softening component."

The claims are not further amended herein.

Applicant believes that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested.

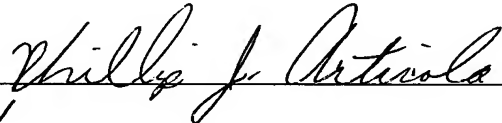
The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

Respectfully submitted,

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